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# SWITZERLAND'S CITIZEN SOLDIERY

## A Military Model for Canada

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CANADA

By Lt.-Col. W. Hamilton Merritt

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# SWITZERLAND'S CITIZEN SOLDIERY.

## A MILITARY MODEL FOR CANADA.

BY LT.-COL. WM. HAMILTON MERRITT,
Commanding Officer of the Governor General's Body Guard,
President of the Canadian Military Institute.

Perhaps the most important utterance ever made in connection with the military organization of Canada was that of the present Minister of Militia, Sir Frederick Borden, when, in the debate on the estimates for the present year, he said:

"At the risk of being charged with advocating conscription, and at the risk "of being misrepresented, I will make a suggestion for the consideration of the "committee, whether the young men of Canada, under the age of 21, who have "not yet seriously taken up the work of life, may not fairly be asked to give "three annual trainings in the militia of the country, or an equivalent."

—*The Globe*, Toronto, July 11th, 1904.

And in another part of his speech the honourable gentleman alluded to the fact that Switzerland had a splendidly equipped militia army of 250,000 men. From this it seems clear that the Minister of Militia is deeply impressed with the military system in vogue in Switzerland, and I take the liberty of bringing some facts in connection therewith before the members of this Institute, as I can conceive of nothing that could be of more interest to them either in their capacities as military men or as citizens and tax-payers.

A distinguished Swiss military writer and historian, Colonel Camille Favre, recently read an admirable paper on the Swiss Militia before the Royal United Service Institution in London, under the auspices of the National Service League, of which the Duke of Wellington is President. In the course of his remarks Colonel Favre said:

"If we wish to discover the foundation of the Swiss Army, itself identical "with the Swiss Nation, we must seek it in her past history. It is her history "that has created her military spirit and the national traditions, which, after "the lapse of centuries, form the basis of our military system as it stands to-"day."*

In like manner, I take it, if we in Canada wish to know the spirit of our forefathers, and the National Military System which,

*The words of the Swiss Army regulations are: "Discipline is the outcome of a sense of duty and is exemplified in the faithful performance of that duty and in implicit obedience. The faithful performance of duty is the joint product of patriotism and self respect."

after a death struggle for their country in 1812-14, they believed to be a necessity for Canada, we will find it in our old Militia Laws, which to-day are crystallized in our present Militia Act under the dormant "Leve en masse" clauses.

For the purposes of this paper I will formulate as hypotheses:

Firstly, the position of Switzerland and Canada are identical;

Secondly, Switzerland has been following the right path while we have not; and

Thirdly, that we should entirely change our existing system, as unsatisfactory and unsuited to our position.

Therefore, as I have already said, if any grounds exist for these hypotheses a sketch of the system in vogue to-day in Switzerland should be of interest to the members of the Canadian Military Institute, and indeed to every patriotic man and woman in Canada, as nothing should be more sacred than the safety of the country.

It is needless to remark that the isolated position of the British Isles makes the necessity for a National defence system for them in no way comparable to the exposed condition in which we exist, yet, in his preface to Colonel Favre's paper, the Duke of Wellington wrote:

"In the belief that the Swiss Militia System presents a sound model on "which we may form an adequate and efficient home defence force, 'a nation in "arms,' without laying undue burdens upon the people, without harmful inter-"ference with industry, and without departing from those traditions of civic "freedom which we share with the Helvetian Republic, I commend these "pages, 'A Model for a National Militia,' to the thoughtful consideration of my "countrymen."

We have been satisfied to drift along as mere copyist of, (as Kipling terms it,) "a red little dead little army" in Great Britain, (but we must acknowledge of glorious associations and traditions,) *which was built up for outside wars and not for defence of the country,* (Vide Times' History of S. A. War, Vol. 2,)* and which system is in no way applicable to this country. If an awakening is desirable in the motherland, if the faintest reason for it exists there, (and powerful organizations have been created there for that object,) surely a burning necessity exists for another model in Canada.

Such a model is furnished by a small, brave nation like Switzerland, which is organized only for defence and against giant nations.

In connection with the importance of considering Militia movements in our past history I would like to draw your attention to a contribution by the Hon. L. G. Power of Halifax, N. S., which

*The Secretary of State for War on March 8th, 1906, stated in the British House of Commons, "The British army which was required for *overseas purposes* must be of a high quality, and should be strictly limited in dimensions."

appeared in the Canadian Magazine in 1902. In his article Senator Power complains:

"Since the union of the Provinces, 1867, neither Government, Parliament nor the people have appeared to treat the subject of the Militia very seriously."

He states that under the law in operation in Nova Scotia up to the time of the union of the Provinces, there was in that Province alone a Militia of 58,000, of whom 45,767 were actually drilled in 1866, and the total expense of that year was only $114,460. Senator Power points out that under the old Nova Scotia law the militiamen of the first class were drilled for five days every year. The officers were obliged to undergo a fairly long course of instruction, and to pass examinations on their duties, and the men were drilled by sergeants qualified as instructors. The privates did not as a rule wear uniform, and with the exception of the headquarters' staff, the adjutants and the drill sergeants, none of the force were directly paid. The yearly training was not looked upon as a burden or a grievance. In fact, it was regarded rather in the light of an annual picnic. The Senator makes a special point in the statement that if their old law had been retained in Nova Scotia that in that Province alone there would be twice as many active Militia as in the whole Dominion to-day, at a mere fraction of the present expense, and that substantially they would not be much inferior to the present comparatively small force known by the same name.

It is no new thing for the Swiss Military System to be under the consideration of the Canadian people. Sir Frederick Borden, as I have already noted, alluded to it in his speech in connection with last year's militia estimates. The honourable Senator above mentioned made it the pivotal point of his valuable paper, and the fact that it has points of excellence has no doubt always been present in a greater or less undefined manner in the minds of all militiamen in Canada.

Personally, I must confess, my information was of a very vague character until enquiry made on the spot last summer supplied me with most of the data I now venture to bring before this Institute. The main facts were given me by a Swiss officer, and my notes from this source and from a pamphlet on the subject were most kindly revised by the Military Attaché of the British Embassy in Switzerland, who holds the rank of a full Colonel in the regular army.

This officer in returning my notes, revised to date, makes the remark: "As you say, we want some system of the kind badly all over the Empire, and I trust we shall get it *before it is too late.*" As a matter of fact, I am under the impression that this officer has misunderstood me, for I do not think I ventured to express any opinion

as to the advisability of adopting the Swiss system anywhere outside of Canada. But for reasons previously expressed, if indeed this system is adjudged, by those who know all about it, to be needed throughout the Empire, including the mother country, there should be no question whatever about the imperative necessity of it for Canada.

I shall now take the liberty of giving a short resume of the Swiss Military System, and more especially of those parts of it which might well be considered in Canada.

### CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

The Swiss army is a Militia force, (citizen soldiery,) based on the principle of universal liability to service, ("Patriotic Service.") Every Swiss citizen is liable to military service for a period of from thirty to thirty-three years. First in the "Elite" for 12 years, (cavalry 10 years); then in the "Landwehr" 13 years; then in the "Landsturm" for 5 years: namely, in the "Elite" from 20 to 32 years old; in the "Landwehr" from 33 to 44, and in the "Landsturm" from the age of 45 to 50, (in case of officers to 55,) who have passed through the "Landwehr," also of men from 17 to 50 who are not incorporated in any other part of the army, but who can be usefully employed during war, (namely, pioneer companies for throwing up earth works, firemen, butchers, bakers, messengers, car men, etc.) These latter belong to an unarmed section which is in the proportion of about 5 to 1 of the total strength of the "Landsturm."

The service of the recruit commences with the year in which he reaches the age of 20. At 19 years of age every man is examined medically, and all who are fit and who are not criminals must serve as already mentioned. The first year the recruit training is for infantry 6 weeks, for artillery 9 weeks and for cavalry 12 weeks. After finishing this recruit training they are incorporated in their Cantonal Regiments, except those drafted to confederation units. They are given, so far as possible, the choice of branches of the service they prefer.

### THE ACTIVE MILITIA (or "Elite").

These men are then in the "Elite" or Active army. Hereafter cavalrymen are called out every year for a ten days' training for ten years, and are in the "Elite" until the end of their eleventh year of service. Men of other arms are only called out as follows:—

Infantry }
Engineers } .....16 days
Artillery.....18 days

*every other year* until the end of their twelfth year of service.

### THE SECOND LINE OF THE ACTIVE MILITIA (or "Landwehr.")

On leaving the "Elite" the men pass to the "Landwehr" (or Reserve) in which they remain till the end of their 25th year of service. Infantry and Artillery of the "Landwehr" are called out for training every fourth year for five and six days respectively.

*From the above it will be seen that a private in the Infantry is called out for only 125 days' training during his first 13 years service, and for only 135 days during his whole period of service of 25 years, BEING AN AVERAGE OF LESS THAN FIVE AND A HALF DAYS A YEAR. When not out for training he draws no pay, and is to all intents and purposes a civilian, except that he retains charge of his clothing, arms, and equipment, and is required to fire 30 rounds at target practice annually.*

### THE RESERVE (or "Landsturm.")

A third category of troops for home defence is furnished by the "Landsturm," which is composed of all able bodied citizens between the ages of 17 and 50 years, who are not embodied in the "Elite" or "Landwehr," and are not exempt from service, as well as of volunteers under 17 and over 50 years of age, and of officers over 55 years of age.

### FORTRESS GARRISONS.

Switzerland has two fortress garrisons, the St. Gothard and St. Maurice.

There is a peace garrison, which keeps the forts from surprise before mobilization of a detailed war garrison is complete. The peace guards number about 100; they are on permanent pay and are mostly artisans and workman, who have served in the "Elite." They have charge of the forts in peace and keep them in repair.

The regional guard consists of all men of the surrounding country during their period of service in the "Elite" and "Landwehr." This guard takes charge of the fortresses until the proper war garrison assembles.

These war garrisons consist of

(1) *For St. Gothard Fortress Defences.*

Staff.
10 Infantry Battalions.

2 Fortress Artillery Brigade Divisions.
2 Machine Gun companies.
1 Fortress Sapper company.
4 Sapper companies.
1 Telegraph company and
1 Ambulance company.

(2) *For St. Maurice Fortress Defences.*

Staff.
5 Infantry Battalions.
1 Fortress Artillery Brigade Division.
1 Machine Gun company.
1 Fortress Sapper company.
1 Sapper company.
1 Telegraph company.
1 Ambulance company and
½ Brigade Division of position artillery.

Instruction and training of the war garrisons take place in the neighbourhood of the defensive positions under the orders of the commandants of the defences.

## MILITARY TAX.

All Swiss citizens who for any reason are exempted from service in the "Elite" or "Landwehr" have to pay an annual tax, which consists of a personal charge of $1.20, and a supplementary tax in proportion to property or income at 30c per $200 value of property or $20 income. No tax is imposed on property under $200, and in assessing $120 is deduced from net income.

## INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING.

There are no regular soldiers in Switzerland except the instructors and the few peace guards of the two fortress garrisons.

The instruction and training of the army is carried out at the cost of the confederation by a permanent corps of instructors under the orders of the Military Department.

The personnel of instruction is placed for each arm under the orders of the "Chef d'Arme" of that branch of the service.

At the head of the instructional staff of each branch is a chief instructor, who also replaces the "Chef d'Arme" whenever the latter is prevented from performing his duties.

The authorized effective of the corps of instructors is as follows:*

| | Chief Instructor † | District Instructor. † | Musketry Instructor. † | 1st Class Instructor. † | 2nd Class Instructor. † | Trumpeter and Drummer, Instructors and Asst. Ins. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Infantry | 1 | 8 | 1 | 36 | 67 | 16 | 129 |
| Cavalry | 1 | | | 5 | 8 | 2 | 16 |
| Artillery | 1 | | | 4 | 14 | 18 | 37 |
| Engineers | 1 | | | 3 | 6 | 6 | 16 |
| Medical services | 1 | | | 4 | 4 | 2 | 11 |
| Administrative services | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | 3 |
| | †6 | †8 | †1 | †53 | †100 | 44 | 212 |

Not more than a quarter of the "personnel" of the Corps of Instruction, not including such officers of the general staff as belong to the corps, can be incorporated in the army. This provision is intended to ensure that on mobilization a sufficient number of instructors may be available both to train the Recruits, who would be called in, and also to fill vacancies in the higher commands, *also to avoid the introduction of too much of the professional element into what is purely a Militia Army.*

The Instructors have no headquarters save the districts to which they have been detailed. They have no barracks or anything of that sort save when they are with the corps to which they are attached, and which corps always puts in their trainings partly in the field and partly in barracks.

Instructors are never appointed at once; they serve first provisionally in every grade to see if they are fit.

The courses of instruction are:

(1) Recruits' Courses.
(2) Repetition Courses (Annual Training).
(3) N. C. O.'s Courses.
(4) Officers' Preparatory Course.
(5) Special Courses.
(6) Musketry Exercises and Inspections.

(* Those marked with a † are all officers.) In addition to those in this table there are officers who are aspiring to the position of Instructor and N. C. O. Assistant Instructors; also N. C. O.'s and officers who are attending Recruits' courses as officers on appointment or N. C. O.'s aspiring for commissions.

## RECRUITS' COURSES.

The object of the Recruits' Course is to give each soldier sufficient instruction in all branches of his duties to make him fit to take his place in the ranks.

The duration of the Recruits' Course for the different arms, not including the day of joining or that of dismissal, is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry | 45 days. |
| Cavalry | 80 " |
| Field and Position Artillery | 55 " |
| Engineers | 50 " |
| Medical Services | 46 " |
| Supply Services | 38 " |

From the recruits temporary regiments are constructed, the N. C. O.'s and officers of which are in every case a lower grade to that in which they are acting, and who, while instructing the recruits, are getting experience and proving their qualification for a step in rank. These have to undergo a preliminary course of eight days, (in Cavalry four days,) before the recruits join, the whole of the instruction being supervised and assisted by the permanent instructors.

## REPETITION COURSES.

These are the annual trainings. Army corps are called out in alternate years.

The following tables show duration of courses (not including days of joining and dismissal) and training of army corps.

| | Elite days. | Landwehr days. |
|---|---|---|
| Infantry | 16 | 5 |
| Cavalry | 10 | |
| Field Artillery | 18 | 6 |
| Pontoon companies and park columns | 16 | |
| Engineers | 16 | 5 |

Cavalry every year while in the Elite, men of other arms every other year in the Elite and every fourth year in Landwehr.

## SCHEME OF GENERAL TRAINING.

| Example of two years. | 1904. | 1905. |
|---|---|---|
| Regimental exercises | IV. Army Corps. | I. Army Corps |
| Army Corps manœuvres | III. " " | II. " " |

## NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS' COURSES.

During the Recruits' Course about one-eighth of the recruits are

selected by the instructors as pupils for the N. C. O.'s course. This lasts 28 days in the Infantry and 35 days in the Artillery.

In the cavalry the place of this course is taken by the "Cadre" course, which lasts 42 days, and is attended by men who are nominated for promotion to Corporals as well as by all N. C. O.'s and by the First Lieutenants who are next for promotion to Captain.

### OFFICERS' PREPARATORY COURSE.

This course lasts 42 days in the Infantry and 60 days in the Cavalry. In the Artillery there are two successive courses, lasting 42 and 63 days respectively.

Before being selected for these courses N. C. O.'s must have attended a Recruits' Course in the rank of corporal and have passed an examination in general knowledge.

An Infantry officer has to go through a course of musketry lasting 4 weeks, after which he attends a Recruits' Course, in which he has to superintend the instruction of a section.

The following table shows the average number of days' training which must have been received by a Cavalry and by an Infantry officer promoted to Captain in his 12th year of service:

### CAVALRY OFFICER.

| | |
|---|---|
| Recruits' Course | 80 days |
| Officers' preparatory | 60 days |
| Recruits' Course as officer | 80 days |
| Cadre school | 42 days |
| Central school | 42 days |
| School of instruction for squadron leader | 80 days |
| 11 Repetition courses | 110 days |
| Total | 494 days |

### INFANTRY OFFICER.

| Year of service. | Course of Instruction. | Number of days in each course, etc. |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Recruits' Course | 45 |
| | Repetition Course | 16 |
| 2. | N. C. O.'s school | 28 |
| 3. | Attending a Recruits' Course as a N. C. O. | 53 |
| | Repetition Course | 16 |
| | Officers' preparatory course | 42 |
| 4. | Special Musketry course | 28 |
| | Attending a Recruits' Course as an officer. | 53 |
| 5. | Repetition Course | 16 |
| | Forward | 297 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Forward | 297 |
| 7. | Repetition Course | 16 |
| 8. | Special officers' course as 1st lieutenant | 42 |
| | Attending a Recruits' Course in command of a company | 53 |
| 9. | Repetition Course | 16 |
| 11. | Repetition Course | 16 |
| | Total | 440 |

Being an average of 40 days a year for 11 years, the officer being a captain at the age of 31.

Captains and majors, in addition to attending the ordinary repetition courses with the troops under their command, have to attend special courses for officers of their rank to qualify for promotion.*

MUSKETRY EXERCISES.

The Recruits' Course in the Infantry includes a course of musketry in which each man fires from 185 to 225 rounds.

Great importance is also given to musketry instruction in the cavalry.

The Repetition Courses, when not combined with army corps manœuvres, also include a short course of musketry, for which about 90 rounds of ball ammunition per man are provided.

In those years in which they are not called out for other instruction infantry-men of the Elite and Landwehr have to fire at least 30 rounds in a voluntary shooting club under strict conditions, or in a military musketry course lasting three days. As, however, the man retains his rifle in private life and can obtain ammunition at cost price, the majority fire a great many more rounds than is required by law.

PRELIMINARY GYMNASTIC TRAINING.

In view of the small amount of time available for the training of recruits much importance is attached in Switzerland to the preliminary gymnastic training of boys at school.

All boys between the ages of 10 and 15 attending public or private schools must attend courses of gymnastic instruction amounting to at least 60 hours per annum, and the Cantons and Communes are bound by law to provide gymnasia and apparatus in the neighbourhood of the schools.

*It must be remembered that a citizen in Switzerland need not be an officer unless he desires it, therefore the amount of time in courses and military trainings, which looks so formidable in rows of figures is in reality purely a voluntary matter over and above the training for a private, before alluded to. Moreover, the enormous waste of time and money incurred by our Militia officers, to recruit up their corps, is entirely done away with—a full regiment is always there ready for them.

In many of the Cantons military instruction is further imparted, to boys from the age of 16 upwards until they become liable to military service. Col. Favre favours the school training as good physically, instilling discipline, teaching self control and making the children obedient.

He does not, however, favour the compulsory gymnastics and preliminary musketry which the law provides for from the time of leaving school until military duty commences, and he thinks it does not find favour in Switzerland at large and is undesirable.

### AVAILABLE STRENGTH AND COST.

The various branches of the service consist of :—
General staff and railway section.
Infantry.
Cavalry.
Artillery and train.
Engineers (including sappers, bridging detachments, telegraphists, a railway pioneer battalion and a balloon detachment.)
Medical and veterinary services.
Supply services.
Military justice.
Chaplains.
Posts and telegraphs.
Staff clerks.
Cyclists.

### STRENGTH.

| Infantry. | Cavalry. | Artillery. | Elite and Landwehr Other Arms and Departments. | Trained Landsturm. | Total. Men. | Total. Guns. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 178,522 | 8,904 | 30,326 | 18,679 | 45,864 | 282,295 | 360 |

### COST.

*Estimates for 1905-6.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Expenditure | £1,240,843 | |
| Revenue | 122,468 | |
| Net total | £1,118,375 | $5,435,202.50 |

### CARE OF STORES.

Every N. C. O. and man during his term of service, (from age of 20 to 44,) keeps his arms and clothing, (also saddlery in cavalry only,) which are inspected at annual training, ("Repetition Courses,") or in the alternate year when in all arms (but cavalry) there is no train-

ing, then the inspection takes place at a simple mobilization inspection for which they must assemble without pay.

Every man is held responsible for all his things by law, and the numerical checking off of articles is done by permanently employed civilians.

The commanding officers of corps are not responsible for the stores which are in the personal possession of the men in their regiment. All the stores, however, of a heavy character, such as artillery stores, waggons, farriers' forges and tools, etc., are kept in ordnance stores in each district and are drawn out for each training. These the commanding officer is responsible for and must return into stores after the training, and settle for any deficiency.

Moreover, for cavalry it is a regimental duty to have each man visited by a regimental officer where he lives and a report made on his surroundings, the state of his horse, his hay and oats, if he keeps his saddlery and rifle in a dry place, etc. Pay is allowed for this work. The government pays half the cost of the horse, and in ten years the man owns it absolutely. Meantime, however, the man has the use of the horse.

The stores not kept altogether in the possession of the man are kept in an ordnance store in each district, and a civilian government storekeeper is permanently paid for the work.*

### PROMOTION.

A man must serve as a private; then, if good enough, he gets a further course and is made a N. C. O.

From the N. C. O.'s the best are chosen, and after another course they are made lieutenants. From that rank there is still another course to qualify for 1st lieutenant, and so on for each step, every grade having a qualifying examination, alluded to in detail before under "Instruction and Training."

### PAY

Is at a rate supposed to cover the cost of maintenance and food while on duty. It is not a payment in return for services rendered, but it is simply intended as compensation.

### RIFLE RANGES.

Every village must have its rifle range of 300 meters, and every man, as before indicated, must shoot at least 30 shots a year. If he omits to do this he is compelled to turn out for a three days' special

* This, it will be noted, is in marked contrast to a recent regulation in our Canadian service, which virtually makes it imperative that a caretaker shall be a member of the permanent corps.

training in musketry. The range is helped by a subsidy from the government.

A few general extracts from Col. Favre's paper might well be noted:

In Switzerland it is generally considered as a mark of inferiority for a man not to serve, so that in place of shirking service a young man who is not really up to the required standard will sometimes succeed in getting himself passed as a recruit.

Referring to the standard of the soldier under the Swiss system, he says:

"In the old days, two centuries ago, armies were the scum of the population. By the beginning of last century things had begun to improve, but since the adoption of compulsory universal service, which has drawn into the ranks every able-bodied man of the nation, the personnel has undergone a very considerable change."*

As an example, concerning the Swiss cavalry, he says:

"The cavalry is mainly composed of well-to-do peasants, proud to belong to this select service. They are a very superior lot of men and are fond of the work."

In Switzerland it is found that the rifle clubs are made practical and successful largely through the compulsory shooting necessary in the alternate years when men in the "Elite" and "Landwehr" are not training.

With reference to instructors, some quotations from Col. Favre's paper are:—

"If the higher commands were always held by instructors,** not only would their duties be interfered with but there would be nothing to encourage the ordinary regimental officers. These latter would obviously be relegated to an inferior position, without any hope of promotion, and would consequently lose all their keenness; this would simply mean the ruin of the army. The function of the instructors, therefore, is not to take the place of the regimental officer but to help the latter in his work and give him the benefit of his experience."

"If we admit that the instructors are indispensable in their capacity of teachers, it does not at all follow that they are suited for high commands, simply in virtue of their experience."

"There will always be plenty of good regimental officers, frequently men with considerable tactical ability, in a national militia."

"In any case, in order to have officers who reach a certain standard of excellence, it is absolutely indispensable that the militia should form a genuine

*The spirit which existed under the old regime in Nova Scotia was alluded to in connection with the extracts from Senator Power's paper.

On the other hand, the spirit engendered by the existing system in Canada is simply a direct bid to the man out of work to turn out for so many days to obtain so much money. Throughout the force at large I think I am correct in the belief that the system, as it at present exists, is not successful in procuring a high average of the young Canadian, and a much better militia from every point of view would result from the adoption of the Swiss system, especially if a note, made by the military attache to whom I have alluded, is borne in mind, namely: "To avoid the introduction of too much of the *professional* element into what is purely a militia army."

** It will be noted that in the Swiss system instructors are appointed only after working up through all grades and showing particular ability in the work.

army, bound together by the traditions of its past, the hopes for its future, esprit de corps, ambition, and, above all, confidence in itself."

"If the work of the officer is made too easy for him, if he is held in leading strings all his life, the result will be that he will lose his power of initiative, and that the army, instead of being improved, will become demoralized."

In concluding his paper on his country military organization Col. Favre gives a chapter on "General Considerations." In this chapter, among other valuable pieces of information, he says:

"Important, however, as this question of discipline is from a military point of view, it has an even more vital bearing on our national and social life. The democratic state of society in which we live to-day—ultra-democratic perhaps to-morrow—is of a kind to cause us some misgivings. Is there any counterpoise to keep the balance true? Can this great social movement guide itself? Can it put a limit to its own momentum? This is the great question of the day, the grand problem of the future, and if we turn for an answer to the past history of democracy, when life was, it is true, very different from what it is to-day, we do not perceive any grounds for reassurance. But whatever the future may have in store for us, one thing is quite certain, namely, that if we wish to counteract the evils inherent in a democracy by a system of national discipline, we must make a beginning either at the school boy's desk or on the parade ground. In no other way can a nation be taught self control. That Switzerland has held together for so long is due to two constraining forces—the federal nature of the governing body (the outcome of local patriotism), and universal military service."*

"Health is only another word for the discipline of the body, and the physical advantages that accrue to the nation from military service are no less real than the moral gains. This is so universally believed throughout the country that I am not aware that there has . er been any necessity to prove it. I shall not, therefore, quote any statistics, but I shall confine myself to asserting that, according to the best authorities, the effect of military service upon the general state of public health is, in spite of the exertions it involves, excellent."

Col. Favre finally crystallizes his experience in a conclusion in part as follows:—

"Judging, then, from the experiences of Switzerland we may safely say that compulsory service, besides being intrinsically sound and right, is beneficial to the country as a whole and to the individual man. It is right that in a country which calls itself free every citizen should make a personal contribution towards the defence of his home. It is not right that this sacred duty should be left to those who make soldiering their profession, or to those who, actuated by the loftiest motives, are prepared of their own free will to devote a large part of their time and money to the cause. If the material and moral advantages of education are to be realized to the full it becomes imperative that every man should fully understand the meaning of the words duty, obedience, discipline and self sacrifice in time of war. And not only from the moral standpoint is military service thoroughly sound, but also for purely physical reasons." "By developing the character and giving a certain stability of temper to each individual, the sum total of the moral and material energy of the country is largely increased." "A national army is, for good or evil, the national barometer. If the army does not prosper it means that the country despairs of itself. Is it not well worth while, then, making an effort towards its salvation?"

* We have a brilliant recent example of this in the case of Japan.

## CONCLUSIONS.

Finally, it seems to me that there are, over and above the striking facts and conclusions which I have taken from Col. Favre's paper, many more other equally powerful reasons why we should adopt the Swiss system in Canada.

One important one, which should appeal very strongly to every ratepayer, is that for less money than it costs us to maintain our force enables Switzerland to have an effective army of seven times as large as ours, and superior to it in training, organization and equipment. The exact figures are:—

ESTIMATES FOR 1905-6.

| | |
|---|---|
| Switzerland | $5,435,302.50 |
| Canada | 5,474,490.00 |

Of course the enormous disparity which exists in the sum paid, and results obtained, is chiefly on account of Canada trying to follow the lead of the mother-land, in having a little standing army,* which does not exist in Switzerland. The amount for this required some $2,490,000 in last year's estimates as against some $2,984,490 for all other military expenditure, including headquarter and district staffs.

Then with reference to military training. From a purely practical and common sense point of view there cannot be any comparison between the grand manœuvres of the Swiss and in our fixed camp of instructional training. As will have been already noted, every Swiss corps takes part in the grand manœuvres in alternate years. The other year is devoted to details of regimental training with musketry, concluding with regimental manœuvres on a small scale.

The grand manœuvres, however, are quite on a war scale and are very properly arranged to imitate it as nearly as possible. Two army corps start out to find one another. The manœuvres take place over a wide stretch of country and not on familiar ground. All routine, drill, etc., is reduced to a minimum. Col. Favre states, concerning the manœuvres, that "without them our army would practically cease to exist," and "the army corps system leads directly to decentralization, which undoubtedly helps to develop to a constantly increasing extent the individual capacity and initiative of the regimental commanders."

In Canada, on the other hand, we are not even allowed to march to our annual training or to send experimental patriots to test mobil-

* Organized and maintained for "*over seas purposes.*" (Sec. of State for War, already quoted).

ity and efficiency. In this respect Switzerland again gives us an object lesson well worthy of our consideration.

In connection with the matter of instruction and professional military assistance some very vital considerations arise to a busy non-professional citizen soldiery. The principle of professional instructors being attached to units of citizen soldiers is by no means peculiar to Switzerland. We all know that in such organizations in the mother country it has been found desirable, (or necessary, as the case may be,) to provide each corps with an adjutant and a regimental sergeant-major paid by the government. If this has to be done in a rich country like England, where there are so many men of leisure with ample means, how much more urgently must it be required in a new country like Canada, where the inordinate sacrifice of time and money that officers in our citizen militia are called upon to make is wholly unreasonable? If the people at large understood the matter there would, I am sure, be a general feeling toward making it lighter for the tax-payer by adopting the Swiss system of a corps of instructors disseminated through an army of citizens soldiers, (instead of our present expensive little standing army,) and using a proportion of these instructors, as in England, to assist the hard-pressed citizen officer, who is at present serving his country at a sacrifice of time and money unequalled, in all probability, in any other country in the world.

As an imperfect example of what can be done by an instructor lent to a regiment, I can instance the excellent results from classes held for six weeks last spring in connection with my own corps in country localities.

The instructor held two series of classes during the six weeks, at central points, and at the conclusion of the classes, after practical and written examinations, recommended 8 sergeant and 10 corporal certificates (regimental) of qualification.

In addition to this we qualified 9 sergeants and 3 corporals in Toronto by classes held in the armouries, making a total of 17 sergeant and 13 corporal certificates issued regimentally.

We have always found most excellent results arising from our permanent instructors, and the above is but an indication of what could be done by a single instructor attached to a rural corps, especially if he could be spared during the winter, when men can easily find the time to attend classes.

In support of some principles I have advanced I would like you to bear with me still further while I quote a few paragraphs from a lecture given last October, before the Canadian club in Ottawa, on

"The Military Element in National Life," by Mr. L. S. Amery* (Fellow of All Souls), the editor of The Times History of the recent war in South Africa.

Before quoting Mr. Amery, I might mention that I think I am absolutely correct in saying that he is to-day regarded as the ablest military critic in the British Empire, as all will freely acknowledge who have read his fearless and unanswerable comments in the above mentioned work.

Mr. Amery in his lecture at Ottawa first advanced (from a civilian point of view) that preparation for war is an essential and necessary element in the life of a nation. He then pointed out instances how a nation could so frame its internal and external policy that the necessary measures of military preparation might be the least burdensome to the mass of the people, interfere least with individual freedom and with the progress of industry, and even be utilized as a means for promoting the general national well being.

He cited abundant examples in the cases of Greece, England, Switzerland and Holland, to show how noble struggles for national being had been followed by the best art and literature the world has ever seen. He said:

"Coming to present history, it was only the other day that Britain had to "pay over a thousand million dollars, and the lives of many of her best sons, in "a war that need not have cost a tenth of that sum if her army had really been "effectually prepared at the outbreak of the war."

"Effective preparation for war," continued Mr. Amery, "is indeed not "only the safest insurance against the terrible consequences of unsuccessful "war, but it is also one of the surest guarantees of peace."

Mr. Amery summed up a magnificent lecture by dwelling on the best means of securing adequate defence in the democratic countries of the Empire, as follows: Of the two systems of land defence, (1) *a permanent paid force* and (2) *a citizen soldiery*, the latter commended itself more strongly to a democratic country.

"It was a truly national system that would secure the largest force with the least expenditure. It should be kept before the people that it is an individual national duty to take part in national defence. It would go a long way towards preventing unnecessary wars when each able bodied citizen felt in duty bound to defend the cause with his life."

In quoting the above strong advocacy of the Swiss, as opposed to our present system, by one who has successfully made a life study of the military systems of the world, it will be felt that the subject must indeed be worthy of the most careful consideration.

And if such a system would suit the needs of militia men better

*Some members present this evening may remember meeting Mr. Amery at the Institute last autumn, in response to an invitation from myself to the members to meet that distinguished gentleman.

tha[illegible]at which now exists, how much more should it suit the tax payer when we again recall that our 40,000 officers and men and some 100 guns cost him more money than Switzerland pays to put her 282,000 officers and men in the field, well trained, armed and equipped, and with 360 guns.

I can therefore but conclude with the earnest hope that the Canadian Military Institute, as a leader of Canadian Military thought, may heartily and earnestly endorse the views of the Hon. the Minister of Militia favouring the Swiss system, and that the Institute will assist in every way possible all steps taken in that direction.